

FOUNTAIN GROVE CA
2008 Waterfowl Hunting Outlook
September 4, 2008

Teal Season (September 6-21, 2008)

No managed teal hunting opportunity will be offered on Fountain Grove due to dry conditions required for wetland renovation project. In the event of a flood during teal season, we will allow hunting on a self-check basis in designated areas posted in the Hunter Checkin room located on the west end of the area shop.

Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season (October 18-19, 2008)

We do not anticipate having sufficient habitat to offer any hunting opportunity during the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Season. If conditions remain dry, the area will be closed to waterfowl hunting during the October 18-19 Youth Hunt weekend. However, if unforeseen events, such as a flood, change area conditions and the area stay wet between now and then such that no progress is made on the wetland renovation project, then we might have the ability to provide some opportunity during the Youth Hunt. If we do offer waterfowl hunting during the Youth Hunt, we would conduct a morning draw both days.

North Zone Duck Season (October 25, 2008 – December 23, 2008)

Waterfowl hunting opportunity on Fountain Grove during the 2008 season is dependent on the progress of the wetland renovation project. Progress of the project has been delayed due to extensive flooding throughout the spring and summer of 2008. Unfortunately, this means that virtually no work has occurred on the project since last fall when unfavorable weather conditions caused work stoppage. Our first priority is repairing levees damaged during the numerous flood events in 2008. Once these repairs are completed, renovation project activities planned for the near-term, assuming conditions remain dry, include installing hardware in 6 water control structures constructed in Pools 1, 2, and 3 last year and completing the new contour levee in J pool. Additional activities with a more uncertain timeline include completing levee construction and water control structures associated with the H-J pool complex, replacing the original 1947 Pool 2 and Pool 3 water control structures and replacing the River pump.

Construction activities associated with the H-J pool complex should progress if conditions dry sufficiently to allow equipment access. The Department is in the process of bidding out replacement of the old, original Pool 2 and Pool 3 structures. Bids will be opened September 4th and must be approved at the September 26th Commission meeting; hopefully, a contractor will be on-site later this fall. The Department is also in the process of hiring a contractor to determine the best water supply system for the area. Once the assessment is completed and a recommendation provided to the Department, the new water supply system will be designed, bid out, and installed. This process to replace the River pump could take several years.

The H and J pool complex is still under construction and will remain closed to all public access. Once a contractor is on site to replace the original Pool 2 and 3 water control structures, the portion of the area associated with these construction sites will be closed to public access (see attached map). This will affect access for both waterfowl hunting and archery deer and turkey hunters.

Waterfowl hunters are required to attend a morning drawing conducted daily at the area headquarters building. Draw time is generally 1 hour 45 minutes before shooting time; however, hunters should double check draw times posted on the Department's internet site or on the area's answering machine (660/938-4124 ext 30). All waterfowl hunting opportunity on Fountain Grove this year will be walk-in style hunting that closes at 1:00 pm. Walk-in hunting opportunities are available in the East Side units (Macs 1-5 and Stinson) and, dependent upon water availability and repairs to flood-damaged levees, in the Parsons Creek units (East Emerson and West Emerson; hunting opportunity in West Parsons and North Parsons is dependent on repairs to flood damage). We anticipate beginning the season with 4-6 positions on the East side and ending the season with 6-8 positions. Hunting opportunity in the Parsons

Creek units is opportunistic and dependent on a rise in Parsons Creek. All waterfowl hunting opportunity is allocated through the morning draw.

Our water management activities this fall for Pools 1, 2, and 3 include adding shallow water to the lower end of Pool 1 in such a way that we do not interfere with the continuing construction activities in H and J Pools. Also, as conditions and progress of the renovation project allow, we will add some shallow water to the Grand River walk-in pools in Pools 2 and 3. Our primary goal is to not only provide shallowly flooded habitat for both resident and migratory wetland wildlife but also to provide waterfowl hunting opportunity where feasible. We will continuously monitor the amount of water and bird use that occurs in Pools 2 and 3 and evaluate whether there is any potential for waterfowl hunting opportunity. Any opportunity in these pools will be dependent on the amount of available water throughout the fall and will be allocated through the morning draw. Also, no water blinds will be available this year so hunting opportunity, if any, in Pools 2 and 3 will be walk-in type hunting and closes at 1:00 pm. Please feel free to contact local area staff at 660/938-4124 or call the Chillicothe office at 660/646-6122 for further updates.

Refuges take effect on October 15 with no hunting or admittance permitted in the West Side Refuge (Pool 1) and the East Side Refuge (Prairie Slough, Prairie Pond, S Hole, Robbins 80, Lower Mac, Che Ru Lake, and area north of CheRu). Also beginning October 15, the area closes to all uses except waterfowl hunting, archery deer and turkey hunting, and fishing at Jo Shelby Lake (all other area ponds and lakes are closed to fishing). Portions of the area designated as Upland Hunting zones will open to small game hunting and fishing on January 1, 2009.

North Zone Canada Goose Season

Fountain Grove **will not** be open during the early phase of the Canada goose season (September 27-October 5). This early season is designed to reduce resident Canada goose numbers, particularly at locations where these resident birds are over populating an area or causing a problem. This is not the case at Fountain Grove where the resident birds are kept in check by the later segment of the Canada goose season. A daily drawing is conducted during the 2nd phase of the Canada goose season (November 22-January 30) to allocate goose hunting opportunities. If we freeze up or there are not sufficient numbers of Canada geese on the area to warrant a drawing, we will go to a self-check system. This information will be posted in the Hunter Checkin room, located on the west end of the area shop, and on the area's telephone system.